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(e) On appeal, the Legal Counsel or designee, or the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, as appropriate, may reduce any fees previously assessed.

(f) In the event that the Commission terminates its proceedings on a charge after the District Director or the District Director's designee denies a request, in whole or in part, for the charge file but during consideration of the requester's appeal from that denial, the request may be remanded for re-determination. The requester retains a right to appeal to the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, from the decision on remand.

(g) A response to an appeal will advise the requester that the 2007 amendments to FOIA created the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation. A requester may contact OGIS in any of the following ways: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road—OGIS, College Park, MD 20740; <https://ogis.archives.gov>; email—ogis@nara.gov; telephone—202-741-5770; facsimile—202-741-5769; toll-free—1-877-684-6448.

[78 FR 36652, June 19, 2013]

§ 1610.13 Maintenance of files.

The Legal Counsel or designee, the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, and the District Directors or designees shall maintain files containing all material required to be retained by or furnished to them under this subpart. The material shall be filed by individual request.

[78 FR 36653, June 19, 2013]

§ 1610.14 Waiver of user charges.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, the Legal Counsel or designee, the Assistant Legal Counsel, FOIA Programs, and the District Directors or designees shall assess fees where applicable in accordance with § 1610.15 for search, review, and duplication of records requested. They shall also have authority to furnish documents without any charge or at a re-

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duced charge if disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester.

(b) District directors, field directors, area directors, local directors and the librarian are hereby authorized to collect fees where applicable in accordance with § 1610.15 for duplication of records which are to be made available for public inspection and copying in the district, field, area or local office, or in the headquarters library in accordance with § 1610.4(b). District directors, field directors, area directors, local directors and the librarian are hereby authorized to duplicate such records without charge, or at a reduced charge in accordance with the criteria of paragraph (a) of this section.

[52 FR 13830, Apr. 27, 1987, as amended at 54 FR 32062, Aug. 4, 1989; 56 FR 29578, June 28, 1991; 63 FR 1342, Jan. 9, 1998; 71 FR 26830, May 9, 2006; 78 FR 36653, June 19, 2013]

§ 1610.15 Schedule of fees and method of payment for services rendered.

(a) Fees shall be assessed in accordance with the fee schedule set forth in paragraph (c) of this section as follows:

(1) When records are requested for commercial use, the Commission shall charge the full amount of its direct costs for document search, review and duplication. The Commission shall not charge for review at the administrative appeal level of an exemption already applied.

(2) When records are not sought for commercial use and the request is made by an educational or noncommercial scientific institution, or a representative of the news media, the Commission shall charge the direct costs of document duplication after the first 100 pages. The first 100 pages of duplication under paragraph (a)(2) shall be provided without charge.

(3) For all other record requests not falling under paragraph (a) (1) or (2) of this section, the Commission shall charge the direct costs for document search time after the first two hours and the direct costs for document duplication after the first 100 pages. The first two hours of search time and the

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first 100 pages of duplication under paragraph (a)(3) shall be provided without charge.

(b) When the Commission reasonably believes that a requester or group of requesters is attempting to break a request down into a series of requests for the purpose of evading the assessment of fees, the Commission shall aggregate any such requests and charge accordingly.

(c) Except as otherwise provided, the following specific fees for direct costs shall be applicable with respect to services rendered to members of the public under this subpart:

(1) For manual search and review time:

(i) By clerical personnel—at the rate of \$5.00 per quarter hour.

(ii) By paralegals—at the rate of \$9.00 per quarter hour.

(iii) By professional personnel—at the rate of \$10.00 per quarter hour.

(iv) By managers—at the rate of \$17.50 per quarter hour.

(v) By SES employees—at the rate of \$20.00 per quarter hour.

(2) For computer searches of records, requesters will be charged at the actual direct cost of providing the service. This includes the operator/programmer salary apportionable to the search based on the rates listed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(3) For copies made by photocopy—\$0.15 per page (maximum of 10 copies). For copies prepared by computer, such as tapes or printouts, EEOC will charge the direct cost incurred by the agency, including operator time. For other forms of duplication, EEOC will charge the actual costs of that duplication.

(4) For attestation of documents—\$25.00 per authenticating affidavit or declaration. Additionally, there may be search and review charges assessed in accordance with the rates listed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(5) For certification of document—\$50.00 per authenticating affidavit or declaration. Additionally, there may be search and review charges assessed in accordance with the rates listed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(6) For each signed statement of negative result of search for record—\$10.00. Additionally, there may be search charges assessed in accordance with

the rates listed in paragraph (c)(1) of this section.

(7) For retrieval of records from a Federal Records Center—the amount charged to EEOC for retrieval of such records.

(8) All other direct costs of search, review, duplication or delivery (other than normal mail), shall be charged to the requester as appropriate in the same amount as incurred by the agency.

(d) The Commission shall not charge a fee if the costs of routine collection and processing of the fee are likely to equal or exceed the amount of the fee.

(e) The Commission shall charge interest at the rate prescribed in 31 U.S.C. 3717, accruing from the date of billing, to those requesters who fail to pay fees charged beginning on the 31st day following the day on which the billing was sent.

(f) While the fees charged for search and copying will in no event exceed those specified in paragraph (c) of this section, the Commission reserves the right to limit the number of copies that will be provided of any document or to require that special arrangements for copying be made in the case of records or requests presenting unusual problems of reproduction or handling.

(g) A search fee will not be charged to requesters specified in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(3) of this section, and a duplication fee will not be charged to requesters specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, if the Commission issues an untimely determination and the untimeliness is not due to unusual or exceptional circumstances.

[52 FR 13830, Apr. 27, 1987, as amended at 63 FR 1342, Jan. 9, 1998; 70 FR 57511, Oct. 3, 2005; 78 FR 36653, June 19, 2013]

§ 1610.16 Payment of fees.

(a) Unless a person making a request under the Freedom of Information Act states that he or she will bear all assessed fees levied by the Commission in searching for and, where applicable, reproducing requested data, said person will be held liable for assessed fees not to exceed \$25.00. A request which the Commission expects to exceed \$25.00 and which does not state acceptance of responsibility for all assessed fees will not be deemed to have been received